



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang
Consumers Association of Penang
檳城消費人協會 பினாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

Websites:
(in English, BM, Chinese,
& Tamil)
www.consumer.org.my

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109
email: consumerofpenang@gmail.com

Press Statement

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No Plastic and No food waste during 2024 Thaipusam

The Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) and Penang State Hindu Sangam are urging Thaipusam devotees to refrain from using plastics and not waste food offered to them by NGOs at stalls.

Organisations setting up thaneer panthals (refreshment stalls) offering free food and drinks, as well as devotees have been urged to refrain from using plastics or polystyrene containers and cups during Thaipusam.

Instead, they should adopt safer options such as using paper plates and cups.

There are safer and better ways to serve food that would not harm others and the environment.

Many options including paper plates and containers as well as paper cups, reusable bags, and even plates made from leaves that are not hazardous can be used.

But wherever Thaipusam is celebrated in the whole country, plastic plates, cups, spoons, and forks dominate in every refreshment stall.

Devotes and visitors must remember that plastic takes a long time to decompose and its duration depends on where the material is located.

When this material is difficult to decay, it will increase the number of existing plastics to become a burden to the environment.

The issue of plastic pollution will become critical if more people use plastics.

The devotees need to halve the use of single-use plastics and reduce their waste to prevent environmental pollution.

The fact is that the silent threat from the use of plastic goods worries many. As a result, many do not realize plastic is a silent enemy to humans.

Some stalls can even serve drinks in stainless steel cups which can be washed.

We are urging a nationwide ban on the use of plastics and polystyrene containers and cups.

During Thaipusam, charity organisations provide free food and most of them use plastic and polystyrene containers.

They cite convenience as a reason for using these containers, cutlery and cups as they are serving large crowds.

We also urged the NGOs need to reduce food wastage.

we are estimating at least 50 tons of food is thrown away every year during Thaipusam.

We urge those serving food to reduce their serving size.

We understand they are giving out annadanam (free food) but there will be no shortage of food for devotees, so we hope they will reduce the portions and only give one pack per person.

We also called on the management of all the temples in Malaysia that celebrate Thaipusam to do away with plastics and polystyrene food containers when serving food to devotees.

Let us use this festival as a platform to save the environment.

This will leave behind a cleaner and safer earth for our children.

N V.Subbarow
Education officer
Consumers Association of Penang

A.Tharman
Chairman
Malaysia Hindu Sangam Penang State Council